

MINUTES
City of New Castle Tree Commission Meeting
May 5, 2014 -- 5:30 p.m.
City of New Castle Town Hall

Members Present: John Lloyd
Nancy Coning
Gretchen Niedermayer
Pam Patone
Erv Thatcher
Tom Truman

Also Present: Debbie Turner, Stenographer

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes – A motion was made and seconded to approve the 4/7/14 minutes. Motion approved.

Members Reports

Mr. Lloyd – Tree removal requests for May 2014 were reviewed. Commissioners were asked to look at the trees on the list for potential action at the next meeting.

- 36-38 West Seventh Street – (*Photos circulated.*) Tree is causing the sidewalk to heave causing a dangerous safety situation. Heavy pedestrian usage. Re-routing the sidewalk is not an option. A flexible material such as gravel could be used in place of the sidewalk. The tree is healthy and offers a significant amount of canopy cover. Mr. Thatcher is requesting removal. Mr. Lloyd will contact the owner about fixing the sidewalk. It is the homeowner's responsibility to address the problem and is a code enforceable situation. Multiple complaints have been received over the years. Tabled until the next meeting.

Tree removal requests for April 2014 – Follow-Up:

- 220 East Second Street – Homeowner has requested removal. Severe root intrusion on sidewalk. Tabled for further observation.
- 58 West Fourth Street – The Bradford pear tree was recently trimmed, but has a bad split in the main crotch of the tree. **A motion was made and seconded to remove the tree. Motion approved.**
- 600 Delaware Street – A large Sycamore tree is causing damage to the roof of the house and the sidewalk. Mr. Lloyd has spoken to the homeowner who is not in favor of removal. The consensus of the group was to not remove the tree.
- 136 East Second Street – Maple tree has a hanger in it that needs to be removed. Commissioners will look at the tree and address at the next meeting.
- 37 East Sixth Street – Pear tree on Sixth and Harmony Street. Homeowner wants to remove the tree before it becomes a problem. Commissioners do not believe the tree is a problem at this time. Tabled for future consideration.

No action will take place until the next fiscal year.

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Follow up -- 36 East 6th Street – There is a Norway maple tree in poor condition that the group was asked to check out. No decision made to date.

Budget Proposal for FY2015 reviewed. Elm trees will be treated for Dutch elm disease this year. Ms. Patone gave a status on tree mapping software. Software is current and will be updated yearly. The disk used in 2005 has been located and uploaded onto the software. She said an audit of current data could be started and updated using records showing trees that have been removed and added. Mr. Lloyd would like to explore having the vendor that did the original tree survey update the survey. Mr. Thatcher informed the Trustees of the New Castle Common would like to inventory trees and their condition in Battery Park. Mr. Lloyd said those trees will be part of the tree survey. Perhaps the Trustees would consider providing some financial support for the project.

Trees represent a financial and aesthetic value to the City. The estimated value of the City's trees (over 1,000) is approximately \$3 million. Discussion turned to maintaining the City's trees and associated costs.

ISA pamphlets were made available to commissioners. Mr. Lloyd secured the brochures for the Arbor Day event at Penn Farm.

Mr. Truman – Who is responsible for planting the oak trees in front of the charter school; they are not an appropriate tree for the location. Mr. Lloyd said the State of Delaware (State) planted them and they will be removed. The City and State (DelDOT) will involve the Tree Commission on any decisions made about trees going forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.